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Providing Environmental Awareness Training for the Hotel Industry Report

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JORDAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT II (JTD II)

**31420 PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS TRAINING FOR THE
HOTEL INDUSTRY REPORT**

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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Background

Tourism is a key driver of Jordan's economy; currently it is the single largest employer and the highest generator of foreign exchange. Jordan is one of the few countries in the Middle East to witness annual growth in the tourism industry. Despite this, tourism is still a high-risk venture in Jordan as it lags in comparison to other countries. The potential for economic and social development stemming from tourism is high, particularly because Jordan has such stunning natural landscape, world-class historic and religious sites, and a fascinating cultural heritage. In order to grow and reap greater benefits from tourism, government and private sector investments must be made in a carefully planned way and Jordan must ensure that tourism development includes quality products, is sustainable, and is developed in a responsible manner. To manage this process the National Tourism Strategy was created in 2004. This strategy focused on four pillars and aimed to lead significant growth in tourism by 2010.

The USAID-funded Jordan Tourism Development Project II is a five-year project (2008-2013) aimed at promoting Jordan's competitiveness as an international tourism destination by establishing the proper institutional and regulatory framework that enables a private sector-driven approach that spurs tourism growth while preserving the nation's historic and natural treasures. Jordan Tourism Development Project II does not seek to use USAID funding to directly build, conserve, restore or manage tourism sites or their related infrastructure, but to provide the training and assistance that will create the environment for the transactions that will lead to proper building and management of tourism sites.

Jordan Tourism Development Project II works along seven major thrusts, one of which is Environmental Sensitivity which seeks to improve the environmental management systems within the sector to reduce waste and conserve on resource utilization.

Introduction

IHG, the world largest hotel company by number of rooms, is trialing a new on-line system called 'Green Engage', which will help hotel Management measure their usage of energy, water, waste produced and their carbon emissions. IHG aims at making all their employees aware of the impacts of their hotel activities on the environment and how to reduce and manage such impacts.

In its effort to promote integration of the environment as one component of day-to-day hotel management and to give hotels the opportunity to make the first steps towards an integrated environmental management system, USAID/ Siyaha was requested to provide training to IHG Hotel Management on best environmental practices relevant to their hotels operations. The training course was designed to assist in filling the gap between commitments to sustainable development and the undertaking of concrete measures. The IHG Training Program for current and new employees integrated the principles of International Best Environmental Practices in the hotel industry.

Objectives and Approach

The main objectives of the training course were as follows:

- To promote integration of the environment as one component of day-to-day hotel management planning and activities
- To promote a rational, practical and eco-efficient use of resources
- To provide hotels the opportunity to make the first steps towards an integrated environmental management system

The approach employed was based on developing an interactive training course designed to cover the following areas:

- Rationalizing the use of resources, including water and energy
- Reducing the volume of wastes and improving waste management practices
- Adopting green purchasing policy and improving logistics
- Improving the quality of the hotel's internal environment
- Organizational and behavioral change within hotels

Methodology

The Consultant/Trainer used his education, experience, and additional understanding from reviewing relevant materials and references to carry out the activities under his scope using the following methodology:

- Design a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation to train IHG hotels management on the following key areas:
 - Organizational and behavioral changes in relation to environmental practices
 - Rationalizing the use of raw materials, including water and energy
 - Reducing the volume of wastes and improving waste management practices
 - Adopting a green purchasing policy and improving associated logistics
 - Improving the quality of the hotel's internal environment
 - Making the staff aware of the importance of environmental issues and the environmental impacts generated by hotels' daily operations
- Conduct training that is aimed at developing hotel management teams who are aware, knowledgeable and equipped on how to:
 - Rationalize the use resources, including water and energy;
 - Reduce the volume of wastes and improving waste management practices;
 - Adopt a green purchasing policy and improving associated logistics;
 - Improve the quality of the hotel's internal environment;
 - Incorporate the necessary concepts and principles in their daily operations and properly the manage change needed
- For each of the 6 components that comprised the training course, an exercise package was prepared and handed out to the participants. Each package consisted of a Journal, Assessment Form, and Action Plan. At the conclusion of each training component, participants were given 10-15 minutes to fill out the respective exercise package. Following this, participants were

invited to share their experience (from their filled out Assessment Form and Action Plan) including lessons learnt. The exercise packages were designed to be kept by the participants and used for future reference.

- During the progress of the training session, participants were continuously encouraged to ask for any clarification they needed and were given the opportunity to discuss and share their experiences. This enriched the training and allowed participants to benefit from the experience of others.
- A 15-page Summary of Actions and Preventive Measures was prepared as part of the training materials and handed out to each participant. This document included all the action items and recommended measures for the five main environment domains covered by the training (Water, Energy, Waste, Green Procurement and Hotel Indoor Environment).
- An assessment form for the training course was prepared whereby each participant would provide his/her feedback, comments and evaluation. The assessment included such issues as: Participant Preparation for the Course, Content Delivery, Trainer/Facilitator Performance, General Satisfaction with the Course, Suggested Improvements, and Additional Future Training Needs. The evaluation used a scale of 1 to 5 to measure the response of the participants on every evaluation topic.
- The training session typically started at 9:15 PM and ended at 4 PM with two 15-minute coffee breaks and 1 hour allocated for lunch.

Record of Training Sessions

Four training session were conducted that included all six IHG hotels in Jordan. The following table presents details on the sessions which provided training for a total of 78 hotel management and technical staff.

Date	Hotel(s)	Training Location	No. of Participants
January 16, 11	Crowne Plaza Amman	Amman	14
February 20, 11	Intercontinental Hotel Aqaba + Crowne Plaza Petra	Aqaba	26
February 27, 11	Intercontinental Hotel Amman + Holiday Inn Amman	Amman	30
March 28, 2011	Holiday Inn Resort Dead Sea	Dead Sea	8

Findings, Observations and Recommendations

- The training course was prepared and presented in a manner that effected a positive, realistic change in the way hotels' technical and management staffs conduct their daily activities, gearing hotel operations towards more environmentally-sound practices.

- The course evaluation form filled out by the participants confirmed that the course objectives were met for each training session held.
- Participants' verbal and written feedback expressed their need for further training in the area of best environmental practices in hotel operations. Their comments often included that this training was an eye-opener for them especially that it was the first environmental training for almost all of them.
- Hotel staff participating in similar training in the future needs to be fully freed from their responsibilities during the training sessions. Although occurred on a limited scale, a few participants had to occasionally leave the training when called by their management on urgent matters. This caused them to skip part of the training.
- It may be useful in the future to consider adding a component to the training course on preparing environmental management plans at both the hotel and department levels. This component will be particularly useful for mid-to-top management personnel. This would require allocating the necessary time to the training session to (estimated at 75-90 minutes).

Annex 1: Training Materials